

***U.S. Department of Education***  
***2021 National Blue Ribbon Schools Program***

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[X] Public or [ ] Non-public

For Public Schools only: (Check all that apply) [X] Title I [ ] Charter [ ] Magnet [ ] Choice

Name of Principal Mr. Stacy DeFoor  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., etc.) (As it should appear in the official records)

Official School Name Carolyn Lewis Elementary School  
(As it should appear in the official records)

School Mailing Address 1805 Old Military Road  
(If address is P.O. Box, also include street address.)

City Conway State AR Zip Code+4 (9 digits total) 72034-8654

County Faulkner

Telephone (501) 450-4835 Fax (501) 450-4896

Web site/URL https://www.conwayschools.org/cles E-mail defoorst@conwayschools.net

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Principal's Signature)

Name of Superintendent\* Mr. Jeff Collum E-mail collumj@conwayschools.net  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

District Name Conway Public Schools Tel. (501) 450-4800

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(Superintendent's Signature)

Name of School Board  
President/Chairperson Mr. Trip Leach  
(Specify: Ms., Miss, Mrs., Dr., Mr., Other)

I have reviewed the information in this application, including the eligibility requirements on page 2 (Part I-Eligibility Certification), and certify, to the best of my knowledge, that it is accurate.

Date \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
(School Board President's/Chairperson's Signature)

The original signed cover sheet only should be converted to a PDF file and uploaded via the online portal.

*\*Non-public Schools: If the information requested is not applicable, leave blank.*

## **PART I – ELIGIBILITY CERTIFICATION**

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The electronic signature on the first page of this application (cover page) certify that each of the statements below, concerning the school’s eligibility and compliance with U.S. Department of Education and National Blue Ribbon Schools requirements, are true and correct.

1. All nominated public schools must meet the state’s performance targets in reading (or English language arts) and mathematics and other academic indicators (i.e., attendance rate and graduation rate), for the all students group, including having participation rates of at least 95 percent using the most recent accountability results available for nomination.
2. To meet final eligibility, all nominated public schools must be certified by states prior to September 2021 in order to meet all eligibility requirements. Any status appeals must be resolved at least two weeks before the awards ceremony for the school to receive the award.
3. The school configuration must include one or more of grades K-12. Schools located on the same campus (physical location and mailing address) must apply as an entire school (i.e. K-8; 6-12; K-12 school). Two (or more) schools located on separate campuses, must apply individually even if they have the same principal. A single school located on multiple campuses with one principal must apply as an entire school.
4. The school has been in existence for five full years, that is, from at least September 2015 and grades participating in statewide assessments must have been part of the school for at least the three years prior to September 2019.
5. The nominated school has not received the National Blue Ribbon Schools award in the past five years: 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019 or 2020.
6. The nominated school has no history of testing irregularities, nor have charges of irregularities been brought against the school at the time of nomination. If irregularities are later discovered and proven by the state, the U.S. Department of Education reserves the right to disqualify a school’s application and/or rescind a school’s award.
7. The nominated school has not been identified by the state as “persistently dangerous” within the last two years.
8. The nominated school or district is not refusing Office of Civil Rights (OCR) access to information necessary to investigate a civil rights complaint or to conduct a district-wide compliance review.
9. The OCR has not issued a violation letter of findings to the school district concluding that the nominated school or the district as a whole has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes. A violation letter of findings will not be considered outstanding if OCR has accepted a corrective action plan from the district to remedy the violation.
10. The U.S. Department of Justice does not have a pending suit alleging that the nominated school or the school district, as a whole, has violated one or more of the civil rights statutes or the Constitution’s equal protection clause.
11. There are no findings of violations of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act in a U.S. Department of Education monitoring report that apply to the school or school district in question; or if there are such findings, the state or district has corrected, or agreed to correct, the findings.

## PART II - DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

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Data should be provided for the current school year (2020-2021) unless otherwise stated.

**DISTRICT** (Question 1 is not applicable to non-public schools.)

1. Number of schools in the district (per district designation):
- 9 Elementary schools (includes K-8)
  - 5 Middle/Junior high schools
  - 1 High schools
  - 0 K-12 schools
- 15 TOTAL

**SCHOOL** (To be completed by all schools. Only include demographic data for the nominated school, not the district.)

2. Category that best describes the area where the school is located. If unsure, refer to NCES database for correct category: <https://nces.ed.gov/ccd/schoolsearch/> (Find your school and check “Locale”)

- Urban (city or town)
- Suburban
- Rural

3. Number of students as of October 1, 2020 enrolled at each grade level or its equivalent at the school. Include all students enrolled, in-person, participating in a hybrid model, or online only. If online schooling or other COVID-19 school issues make this difficult to obtain, provide the most accurate and up-to-date information available:

Grade	# of Males	# of Females	Grade Total
PreK	0	0	0
K	42	42	84
1	57	48	105
2	77	41	118
3	65	36	101
4	56	43	99
5	0	0	0
6	0	0	0
7	0	0	0
8	0	0	0
9	0	0	0
10	0	0	0
11	0	0	0
12 or higher	0	0	0
<b>Total Students</b>	297	210	507

\*Schools that house PreK programs should count preschool students **only** if the school administration is responsible for the program.

4. Racial/ethnic composition of the school (if unknown, estimate):
- 0 % American Indian or Alaska Native
  - 1.1 % Asian
  - 30.5 % Black or African American
  - 9.8 % Hispanic or Latino
  - 0 % Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
  - 51.2 % White
  - 7.4 % Two or more races
  - 100 % Total**

(Only these seven standard categories should be used to report the racial/ethnic composition of your school. The Final Guidance on Maintaining, Collecting, and Reporting Racial and Ethnic Data to the U.S. Department of Education published in the October 19, 2007 *Federal Register* provides definitions for each of the seven categories.)

5. Student turnover, or mobility rate, during the 2019 - 2020 school year: 13%

If the mobility rate is above 15%, please explain:

This rate should be calculated using the grid below. The answer to (6) is the mobility rate.

<b>Steps For Determining Mobility Rate</b>	<b>Answer</b>
(1) Number of students who transferred <i>to</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	46
(2) Number of students who transferred <i>from</i> the school after October 1, 2019 until the end of the 2019-2020 school year	28
(3) Total of all transferred students [sum of rows (1) and (2)]	74
(4) Total number of students in the school as of October 1, 2019	572
(5) Total transferred students in row (3) divided by total students in row (4)	0.13
(6) Amount in row (5) multiplied by 100	13

6. Specify each non-English language represented in the school (separate languages by commas):

Spanish, Russian, Vietnamese, Bengali, Telugu

English Language Learners (ELL) in the school: 9 %  
48 Total number ELL

7. Students eligible for free/reduced-priced meals: 48 %

Total number students who qualify: 245

8. Students receiving special education services: 9 %

45 Total number of students served

Indicate below the number of students with disabilities according to conditions designated in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act. Do not add additional conditions. All students receiving special education services should be reflected in the table below. It is possible that students may be classified in more than one condition.

- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <u>3</u> Autism                  | <u>0</u> Multiple Disabilities                 |
| <u>0</u> Deafness                | <u>0</u> Orthopedic Impairment                 |
| <u>0</u> Deaf-Blindness          | <u>12</u> Other Health Impaired                |
| <u>0</u> Developmental Delay     | <u>8</u> Specific Learning Disability          |
| <u>0</u> Emotional Disturbance   | <u>22</u> Speech or Language Impairment        |
| <u>0</u> Hearing Impairment      | <u>0</u> Traumatic Brain Injury                |
| <u>0</u> Intellectual Disability | <u>0</u> Visual Impairment Including Blindness |

9. Number of years the principal has been in her/his position at this school: 3

10. Use Full-Time Equivalents (FTEs), rounded to the nearest whole numeral, to indicate the number of school staff in each of the categories below. If your current staffing structure has shifted due to COVID-19 impacts and you are uncertain or unable to determine FTEs, provide an estimate.

	<b>Number of Staff</b>
Administrators	2
Classroom teachers, including those teaching high school specialty subjects, e.g., third grade teacher, history teacher, algebra teacher.	23
Resource teachers/specialists/coaches e.g., reading specialist, science coach, special education teacher, technology specialist, art teacher etc.	11
Paraprofessionals under the supervision of a professional supporting single, group, or classroom students.	0
Student support personnel e.g., school counselors, behavior interventionists, mental/physical health service providers, psychologists, family engagement liaisons, career/college attainment coaches, etc.	3

11. Average student-classroom teacher ratio, that is, the number of students in the school divided by the FTE of classroom teachers, e.g., 22:1 22:1

12. Show daily student attendance rates. Only high schools need to supply yearly graduation rates.

<b>Required Information</b>	2019-2020	2018-2019	2017-2018	2016-2017	2015-2016
Daily student attendance	95%	94%	93%	96%	96%
High school graduation rate	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

13. **For high schools only, that is, schools ending in grade 12 or higher.**

Show percentages to indicate the post-secondary status of students who graduated in Spring 2020.

<b>Post-Secondary Status</b>	
Graduating class size	0
Enrolled in a 4-year college or university	0%
Enrolled in a community college	0%
Enrolled in career/technical training program	0%
Found employment	0%
Joined the military or other public service	0%
Other	0%

14. Indicate whether your school has previously received a National Blue Ribbon Schools award.  
 Yes  No

If yes, select the year in which your school received the award.

15. In a couple of sentences, provide the school’s mission or vision statement.

Carolyn Lewis Elementary School will provide a safe, supportive, caring, fun, and collaborative environment so that students can flourish both socially and academically in order to be productive citizens.

16. Briefly describe how your school has been operating during the current 2020-2021 school year (e.g., open as usual, online only, a hybrid model, etc.)? If different grade levels in your building operate in different ways, include this. If the school began with one model and switched to another partially through the year, include this as well.

Carolyn Lewis Elementary, for the 2020-2021 academic year, allowed students the opportunity to choose an onsite or virtual learning experience. All onsite students have been socially distanced and are required to wear masks throughout the day to ensure safety. Virtual students complete assignments and activities online through the Seesaw learning management system as well as meet with a classroom teacher via videoconference for reading or mathematics, daily. After the first quarter, a blended Friday option was added. On blended Friday, all assignments are completed online whether students choose to attend onsite or virtually. This permits onsite students the ability to complete assignments from home on Fridays, per parent permission.

17. **For public schools only**, if the school is a magnet, charter, or choice school, explain how students are chosen to attend.

## **PART III - SUMMARY**

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The motto for Conway Public Schools is, “Every child. Every day. Whatever it takes.” The educators at Carolyn Lewis Elementary embody this slogan and strive for this level of individualized education in each interaction every minute of the day.

Mrs. Carolyn Lewis, the school’s namesake, was a graduate of Conway Public Schools in 1961. After graduating with her BSE in Early Childhood Education, Mrs. Lewis taught in various districts in the area for a total of 23 years before becoming an assistant principal then a principal within Conway Public Schools. Mrs. Lewis served in an administrative capacity for 7 years prior to retiring. However, due to her passion for education and dedication to instilling a lifelong love for learning in students, she then served on the Conway Public Schools Board of Education for 10 years. Mrs. Lewis’ constant example of learning and dedication to helping others is a legacy trait that the educators at Carolyn Lewis strive to instill in students each day.

Carolyn Lewis Elementary, opened in 2012, is Conway Public School’s ninth elementary school. The school was commissioned in order to serve the growing population as development began to shift toward the south end of the town. Conway has continued to grow exponentially due to its centralized location and strong community spirit which is evident in Carolyn Lewis’ enrollment each year. With an average of 570 students, Carolyn Lewis Elementary is Conway’s largest elementary school. Forty-eight percent of our students are economically disadvantaged, nine percent are eligible for special education services, and ten percent are English Language Learners (ELLs). Due to the growing economic and educational differences within our student population, educators at Carolyn Lewis Elementary are committed and constantly evolving their pedagogy in order to establish meaningful relationships with students and families so educational, environmental, and social-emotional needs are met, whether a student is accessing their education virtually or onsite.

Carolyn Lewis’ staff believe elementary school years set the foundation for developing the knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary for children to become healthy, competent, and confident learners. Carolyn Lewis implements the Arkansas Department of Education’s 5 guiding principles to support and educate the development of the whole child in accordance with the G.U.I.D.E. for life program. The model outlines a curriculum for growth, understanding, interaction, decisions, and empathy. Furthermore, through the provision of independently sought grants, was the first school within the district to begin a school garden project.

Establishing a safe and caring learning environment that respects and values diversity are other district level values Carolyn Lewis incorporates into daily routines and practices. In an effort to integrate these values within the curriculum itself, Mentors Empowered, a high school student-mentoring program, works to engage and motivate students each month. Building a culture of caring is another district level value Carolyn Lewis strives to incorporate. This cultural target is evidenced through our character award program where students are recognized for modeling the character word of the month. Students are also rewarded for personal and academic accomplishments through the use of our book vending machine and stellar student awards. This same type of encouragement is also evident in the teaching staff as educators recognize each other by acknowledging each other’s achievements and acts of kindness by posting notes on a “Staff Shout-Out” board.

Carolyn Lewis prides itself on the manner in which educators have creatively adapted to meet the sensory needs of our students as individuals but, also, as they transitioned back into the building after COVID-19 school closures. Throughout the school, there are sensory outlets such as a Travel-Trail, which is used to provide proprioceptive input and gross motor involvement, multiple recesses for younger grades, flexible seating options within the classrooms, and the use of online services such as Go Noodle in the safe room/tornado shelter during times of inclement weather. These simple, creative outlets allow educators to ensure the sensory needs of our students are met in everyday environments regardless of the level of exceptionality.

Carolyn Lewis’ educators are consistently focused on developing innovative ways to reach students and

families through the use of technology. The novel COVID-19 pandemic forced educators around the country to respond quickly so functional, relevant instruction could be provided at home. Carolyn Lewis' educators utilized platforms such as ClassDojo, Zoom, Lexia, MobyMax, Zearn, and many more to ensure families received frequent communication and students stayed engaged in content related to the power standards for reading, math, and writing. At the district level, administrators coordinated efforts to provide internet connections to families within the city limits, hot spots for those outside of the city limits, and arranged pickup appointments for families to obtain a device and food packages, as needed. As the 2020-2021 year began, educators quickly learned how to use a new learning management system, Seesaw, to provide quality instruction for students in both onsite and virtual settings. Educators have demonstrated flexibility and grace as they have transitioned between settings both personally and for individual students as demands related to quarantines, family changes, and educational needs have evolved throughout the year. Additionally, many educators have scheduled personal virtual and/or personal home visits for students. Having educators who recognize the value of how sitting in a front yard, while socially distanced, can significantly encourage learning for virtual students. This simple act of kindness and dedication to teaching the whole student has served the students with a reminder of their importance and role in the school family.

## **PART IV – CURRICULUM AND INSTRUCTION**

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### **1. Core Curriculum, Instruction, and Assessment.**

Carolyn Lewis Elementary is committed to driving learners forward by providing the knowledge and skills to become outstanding members of the community. The school adapted its curriculum, instruction, and assessments during the pandemic to ensure students continued learning imperative skills while considering the environmental challenges students were facing. Last spring, parents were given opportunities to pick up a device and obtain an internet connection for their student(s) to secure a continued learning environment. Staff members worked diligently to confirm students had a means to connect with teachers and support staff to help provide stability. Everyone worked tirelessly to help students reach academic goals while providing support to meet Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. Teachers learned they could teach anywhere so long as students were provided appropriate tools.

At the beginning of the 2020-2021 academic year, students were offered the choice of virtual or onsite learning with social distancing and mask guidelines in place. Instruction was adapted to include a remediation plan to close student learning gaps. Every student was issued a device to access material via the Seesaw learning management system. Virtual students meet online daily with teachers for reading and math lessons while submitting assignments through Seesaw for teacher feedback and support. Onsite students follow a traditional schedule with modifications to provide social distancing and take devices home every evening in case of a quarantine or school closure. One-to-one devices allow students the opportunity to have a consistent, smooth transition regardless of learning environment.

Carolyn Lewis implements a curriculum aligned to the Arkansas State Standards in order to drive instruction. Teacher representatives met and revisited the standards in order to create a remediation plan beneficial to all students. Power standards were chosen and pacing guides along with spiral reviews were created to help close learning gaps. At the end of the year, teachers will review data and work collaboratively to create a new remediation action plan to continue closing the learning gap.

The English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum focuses on reading and analyzing literature, studying grammar of the English language, and writing about diverse topics. ELA instruction is conducted in both whole group and small group settings. It is based on the Science of Reading and multi-sensory learning. The essential components of reading are taught with a spiraling content, including: phonemic and phonological awareness, concepts of print, vocabulary, fluency, and comprehension.

Eureka Math, the math curriculum used by all students at Carolyn Lewis, uses the 8 Mathematical Practices and Depth of Knowledge (DOK) questions to allow students engaging opportunities and connect concepts to real-world problems. Students work cooperatively and use manipulatives to discover multiple avenues to solve problems. Students use grade-level based spiral reviews to strengthen foundational skills.

The Arkansas K-12 Science Standards guides the topics of science instruction while resources such as Mystery Science, Benchmark Reading, and the Farm-to-School garden program allow students the opportunity to see Science take place in a hands-on fashion. Using the resources provided, teachers compose lessons that integrate STEAM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics) throughout the curriculum.

Differentiated instruction is used to maximize student growth and engagement. Face-to-face instruction whether via Zoom or in person is essential and teachers are maximizing upon time spent with students to ensure learning gaps are closed and prevent further loss of learning due to the academic disruption of the pandemic. Teachers use problem-based learning through Eureka Math and Mystery Science lessons. Students work with manipulatives and use inquiry-based problems to determine suitable algorithms in mathematics as well as numerous outcomes in science. Students are also given daily instruction with Heggerty's Phonological and Phonemic Awareness program. Videos of lessons are also provided to virtual and struggling students. Students have access to a plethora of apps readily used in the classroom, including: Lexia, Zearn, Quaver, A to Z Reading, RAZ Kids, Read Theory, ReadWorks, and Mystery Science. These apps also provide data to the teacher and help guide instruction. Another component used is the Response to NBR 2021

Intervention (RTI) process. RTI ensures students who may achieve poor learning outcomes are identified and given support to reach their academic potential. The RTI committee is composed of a principal, instructional facilitator, school psychologist, and interventionists. As needed, the speech therapist, counselor, or other specialty team members are invited to provide additional insights. In the RTI process, teachers provide rich learning experiences for all students while extending students ready to learn more and scaffolding instruction for struggling students. Those unable to meet learning outcomes with additional instruction are provided Tier II supports in a small group setting within the classroom. These students are brought to the RTI committee where ideas are shared to provide an additional layer of support. The RTI committee may also recommend the student receive Tier II or Tier III pull-out supports with an interventionist. The interventionist and the teacher collaborate often and work to change the trajectory of the students learning outcomes.

Various forms of data are collected and disaggregated to gain a better understanding while providing instruction that meets the needs of individual students. Teachers use both formative and summative assessments within the Eureka Math and Benchmark Reading programs. The formative assessments drive individual classroom instruction while summative assessments provide data as to how students are performing as a whole over a particular piece of content. Formative assessments are used in The APPLE Group Connections: OG in 3D Spelling Series as well as within small group reading instruction. Acadience is used to assess the core areas of beginning reading instruction and teachers complete the benchmark assessments three times per year and monitor student progress on a biweekly or monthly basis, depending on individual results. NWEA Map testing is completed three times per year in kindergarten through second grades in order to pinpoint where learning is ready to occur at the individual student level while ACT Aspire is used for grades three and four. Many of these data points among others are included on our school assessment wall which allows administration, interventionists, and RTI committee members the opportunity to have thorough discussions regarding how to best serve students. Carolyn Lewis' desire is to provide individualized instruction so students will be successful throughout school and rise as thriving members of society.

**1a. For secondary schools (middle and/or high school grades):**

**1b. For schools that offer preschool for three- and/or four-year old students:**

**2. Other Curriculum Areas:**

Carolyn Lewis Elementary provides diverse learning opportunities beyond the classroom to engage the whole child, including; enrichment, music, art, physical education, library, counseling, and gardening. Specialty area classes support core content curriculum by integrating the Arkansas State Standards and collaboration with core teachers to develop lessons that will enhance instruction. Onsite students receive a minimum of 40 minutes of specialty instruction, daily, while virtual students receive interactive assignments through Seesaw.

Experiences in art at Carolyn Lewis provides students with a safe place to explore, create, and produce original artwork. Students' artwork dons the hallways as well as students are encouraged to complete in local and state competitions.

Music instruction has been impacted as students are unable to sing in large groupings at this time. An emphasis has been placed on the exploration of music theory, listening stations, and Quaver to further develop their skills in rhythms and patterns. Students typically perform two in-person concert programs during the school year. Moreover, they sing at a local festival, Toad Suck, every May to showcase music to members of the community.

The library media center time allows students a weekly book exchange as well as enriched experiences with

various types of media. Students are able to work in center rotations to: complete research, gain access to digital resources, take a virtual reality 3-dimensional field trip.

Physical education focuses on promoting positive health goals for all students while creating healthy habits centered on the areas of exercise and nutrition. Students explore patterns of movement, various sports, calisthenics, among other activities over the course of the year. It is important to mention that above and beyond the physical education course students have 40 minutes of daily recess consisting of free-play mixed with structured activities.

Enrichment classes focus on STEAM concepts and work to improve critical thinking, problem solving, research, affective development, robotics and creativity. Students identified as gifted in grades 3 and 4 also receive pull-out services through the Pinnacle program. Time is allotted for high ability level students to work together while exploring additional areas of interest.

Counseling classes are offered monthly and promote healthy decision-making, character traits, communication, and positive peer relationships. This year we shifted to the G.U.I.D.E. for life program in order to help meet the needs of the whole child. This has been especially important during this monumental year. Each component of G.U.I.D.E. explicitly addresses life skills that influence students in areas of self-reflection, critical thinking, empathy of diversity, effective communication, safety in choices and responsibility for behaviors. Each facet of these social emotional and academic standards directly impacts student achievement and successfully strengthens the school community as a whole. These objectives are implemented through developmentally appropriate activities ranging from whole class counseling activities, individual counseling, consultation with parents/guardians and school personnel, provision of materials online for virtual students and coordination with community agencies. In addition to the school wide guidance lessons, the counselor collaborates with school staff, parents and the community to create a safe and respectful learning environment. Furthermore, Mentors Empowered, a high school student-mentoring program, works to help engage and motivate students each month. The mentors' present lessons, encourage good decision making and provide leadership while visiting informally during students lunch and recess times to help build rapport and support students in their authentic environment.

Carolyn Lewis is proud to offer a Farm-to-Table garden class to all students, provided by grants, which has been in place for 5 years. These grants, along with a full time support personnel and partnership with the American Food Corps, allowed our garden program to extend the learning experience beyond the walls of the building to an outdoor learning space. Students have been able to participate in hands-on activities and lessons focusing on healthy eating and the farm-to-table process. These types of educational experiences have led to Carolyn Lewis being recognized as an Arkansas School Garden Champion for Best Sustained School Garden. This award acknowledged Carolyn Lewis as having a robust garden education program with cross-curricular educational activities and a designated classroom for hands-on cooking and nutrition classes. These innovative learning opportunities allow students to continue learning about sustainability as well as how to better themselves and our environment as a whole.

### **3. Academic Supports:**

Carolyn Lewis staff works diligently to identify student needs and provide differentiated instructional methods among diverse populations of students.

The academic performance of Carolyn Lewis students is analyzed through assessment and screening data to identify areas of academic support needed for each child. Assessments include: Acadience Reading Diagnostic Screeners, Arkansas Rapid Automated Naming Screener (RAN), Developmental Spelling Assessment (DSA), Phonological Awareness Screening Test (P.A.S.T.), Diagnostic Decoding Survey, Star Reading, NWEA Measures of Academic Progress (MAP), and ACT Aspire. The Acadience Reading Diagnostic Screener assesses students in the areas of Letter Naming Fluency (LNF), Phoneme Segmentation Fluency (PSF), Nonsense Word Fluency (NWF), and Oral Reading Fluency (ORF). Each assessment allows teachers to analyze and determine where to target specific skills in small group instruction across all levels of performance.

Students whose scores are reflective of poor performance in these areas are provided with an Intensive Reading Instruction (IRI) plan to monitor and address their individual needs. Teachers also utilize AR-Ran, DSA, and Acadience Reading Diagnostic to identify students with characteristics of Dyslexia and make recommendations for multi-sensory state approved programs, including: Alphabetic Phonics and The APPLE Group's Connections: OG and 3D Science-Based Reading. Providing an early diagnostic baseline allows students to receive immediate, targeted instruction while being monitored for areas of concern so that educational gaps do not increase.

The aforementioned assessments provide additional resources to guide teachers in determining how to place students in small reading groups according to individual needs. The results from the NWEA MAP as well as the ACT ASPIRE show individual strengths and weaknesses related to each content area while providing reports used to target specific skills during whole and small group instruction. Carolyn Lewis educators then determine how instruction should be adjusted to meet the needs of individual learners regardless of their exceptionality.

Other support services use this aggregated data to drive instruction and placement. ELL teachers use the Arkansas English Language Proficiency Assessment for the 21st Century (AR ELPA21) to plan small group instruction through LPAC modifications, accommodations and/or pull out services. Migrant students are supported through weekly pull-out sessions with a trained educator to provide academic and social-emotional supports. Special education teachers and therapists work collaboratively with the classroom teachers to ensure each student's IEP is fully implemented. Gifted and talented teachers provide support to classroom teachers to meet the needs of students performing above grade level standards while also providing pullout services to students who are identified as gifted according to state guidelines.

In order to close the achievement gap, teachers utilize daily classroom intervention times to provide students with small group instruction based on individual needs. Students above grade level are provided materials to enrich learning while struggling students are provided Tier II intervention within the classroom. Furthermore, Carolyn Lewis utilizes online programs such as Zearn, Lexia, RAZ Kids, and Read Theory to provide targeted instruction according to each student's developmental abilities.

During the novel Covid-19 pandemic, CLE educators worked diligently to provide instructional support online. SeeSaw, a virtual learning management system, was implemented at the district level as a means for educators to support both virtual and onsite students. This system allows teachers to engage in a hybrid learning model where activities and differentiated instruction materials can be assigned. Diverse learning needs and services continued to be provided through the use of online video conferencing applications. Carolyn Lewis interventionists have been able to administer screening assessments and provide weekly Tier III intervention online for students deemed at risk or below grade level standards. Special education teachers and therapists also continue to provide support services and educational instruction through various digital platforms. Carolyn Lewis educators have also provided instructional supplies such as math workbooks, reading modules, decodable texts and multisensory instruction materials for students to use at home so that learning experiences, as a whole, are successful.

## **PART V – SCHOOL CLIMATE AND CULTURE**

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### **1. Engaging Students:**

Fostering a safe and caring learning environment is a value that Carolyn Lewis educators strive to obtain in professional and personal interactions with colleagues as well as students. As mentioned previously, Carolyn Lewis implemented the Arkansas Department of Education's five guiding principles to support and educate the development of the whole child in accordance with the G.U.I.D.E for life program which is designed to meet the executive functioning and social-emotional needs of the students. Additionally, fourth-grade students at Carolyn Lewis are selected by teachers to participate in a school counselor-led program entitled, "The Peacemakers Program." Students are selected based on exhibited leadership skills and desire to be involved in making Carolyn Lewis a peaceful place for students to learn, grow, and play. Once trained on how to approach highly emotional situations and in peer mediation strategies, the Peacemakers attend recess for lower grade levels to assist with supervision and encourage friendships. The program is a valuable addition to the school as has resulted in authentic student relationships and increased independent conflict resolution skills.

Carolyn Lewis Elementary also created school-wide behavior expectations for students to clearly see and follow in common areas of the school building to promote self-regulation while fostering a productive learning environment. Posters were created and placed on school walls as a reminder of the rules and procedures that students are required to follow. "Let's R.I.D.E!" is the acronym used to encourage students to be respectful, inspire leadership, make safe decisions, and to encourage others. The adoption of this school-wide system allows educators in the building to use common, consistent language and the visual reminders promote self-implementation of the ideas.

For students who have demonstrated positive character traits, reached academic or personal goals, Carolyn Lewis has instituted several incentives to recognize and praise student achievement. Every month, a student from each class is either selected by peers or the teacher as an exemplary model of the focus character trait. These students are invited to a special luncheon with the school counselor, presented with a themed t-shirt, and are paraded through their grade level lunch to be recognized by peers. Teachers may also nominate students for behavior and/or academic achievements through the "Stellar Student" program. Students nominated for this award have their name broadcasted through the school intercom and then a lucky winner, or two, are randomly selected and provided an opportunity to choose a book from the book vending machine. Students may also obtain credits in their classroom as a reward for positive choices which can result in extra grade level activities and/or access to a treasure box where students can select a preferred item as a reward. During the COVID-19 closures, teachers motivated students to engage with and complete academic work through the use of scavenger hunts, play-based learning opportunities, and thematic video conference meetings.

### **2. Engaging Families and Community:**

Carolyn Lewis Elementary values community partnerships and firmly believes the school as a whole is only stronger when stakeholders are invested in educational and social-emotional outcomes. In an effort to integrate these values within the curriculum itself, Carolyn Lewis invites Mentors Empowered, a high school student-mentoring program, to help engage and motivate students each month. Additionally, to meet the physical needs of students and their families, Carolyn Lewis works with local churches and businesses to provide family services such as school supply needs, supplemental weekend food programs through the Arkansas Food Bank and eye exams as well as glasses for students in need through the Lions Optimist Club. Most recently, however, Carolyn Lewis staff have had to acknowledge the changes that COVID-19 has had on families, students and staff. Teachers have relied heavily on community partners such as local churches, CAPCA and the Christmas Boot Drive to fill in the gaps of needs related to PPE, providing meals and/or presents for families in financial distress or to simply offer a kind word and encouragement during these unfamiliar and extraordinary times. The support and involvement from community partners has significantly impacted the morale of both teachers and students at Carolyn Lewis due to the fact that, for many, these partnerships have provided the necessary tools or daily provisions that allow educators to do what is

necessary to keep both themselves and the students safe and healthy.

Carolyn Lewis educators understand that a student's success is greatly impacted by the family's involvement at home. In order to ensure that families are active participants in their child's education, multiple methods of communication and involvement are utilized and encouraged. Carolyn Lewis has a thriving parent-teacher organization (PTO) that hosts events and fundraising efforts throughout the year. School-wide events related to awareness of curriculum standards and or health and are provided by staff and attended by students and families. Such events include open houses, a 5k, fall festivals, parent volunteer opportunities and a vocabulary parade which focuses on the development of vocabulary in a fun and visually stimulating manner.

Communicating with parents is a high- priority task that Carolyn Lewis educators practice, daily. Educators use the digital platform, SeeSaw, to engage in two-way communication between a student's family and teachers. Other platforms such as Classroom Dojo have also been previously used to communicate with families regarding behavior throughout the day. In addition to daily communication regarding assignments, classroom needs and successes, Carolyn Lewis uses an official Facebook page to inform families about upcoming events, celebrate student as well as school achievements and to help families feel involved in what is happening within the brick and mortar walls of the school. Parents also have access to the Conway Public Schools app to receive information and updates at the district as well as the school level. Moreover, each week, every grade level within the school shares a newsletter informing parents of upcoming school events and grade level content to keep the family feeling engaged and included in their child's education as a whole.

### **3. Creating Professional Culture:**

Carolyn Lewis Elementary is a perfect example of Conway Public School's core value: A Staff Committed to Excellence. This commitment is made stronger because the administrators strive to create a school environment where teachers and staff feel valued and supported.

In past years, this included beginning of the year bashes at administrator's homes, monthly potlucks celebrating staff birthdays, escape room team-building events, and Christmas parties at local venues. The PTO also plays a part in creating this supportive environment by providing monthly goodies in our staff mailboxes, coffee bars, and several gifts as well as shout-outs during Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week.

This year, however, support has had to look a little different for safety reasons. The administrators have creatively found ways to continue to provide support during the transition to distanced learning. Professional development, in the past, has included staff members from across the district meeting together. This year, staff members were able to meet virtually through Zoom meetings to collaborate and plan for the upcoming school year. This opportunity for collaboration with peers helped better equip the Carolyn Lewis staff with the skills needed to ensure academic achievement for all students even during these trying times. Our school district and administration also delayed the starting date of school to provide time for staff to be trained on the virtual platform, Seesaw, which is being used for virtual learning. This training and professional development prepared staff with the knowledge and techniques to implement successful classroom instruction and, ultimately, student outcomes, whether learning virtually or onsite.

Currently, staff birthdays are still being recognized at our school, but are celebrated through messages on the GroupMe app instead of eating together. Staff meetings are frequently held through a videoconferencing platform instead of gathering in a common area. The administrators also organized and scheduled two virtual days which allowed all staff to receive the Covid-19 vaccine. The dress code has also been adapted to better fit our current needs as staff members are allowed to wear scrubs in order to reduce the spread of the virus to family members.

These extra precautions and the level of concern for staff safety reinforces the feeling of being valued and respected. Educators feel emotionally and physically safe which allows students to feel the same level of safety. Administration also created "Blended Friday's" where students have the option to work virtually, therefore, giving teachers more time to prepare lessons for both onsite and virtual instruction for the

upcoming week. An additional support put in place has been activity teachers going into individual classrooms to help teachers with onsite students, daily, while teachers devote time to virtual learners. These are just a few examples of how the culture at Carolyn Lewis is an environment of value and respect. The professional development and instructional practices implemented over the course of the pandemic have made it possible for educators to feel safe and loved in very uncertain times, which, in turn, directly impacts student achievement and success.

#### **4. School Leadership:**

Carolyn Lewis Elementary is led not only by the principal and assistant principal as leadership is shared with teacher leaders to provide innovative and thoughtful insight to better support students, parents, and staff. The school leadership team works together to ensure new policies, programs, and resources are focused on student achievement. To accomplish this vision, the administrators and staff work together to provide a safe, fun, and secure learning environment for all students.

At Carolyn Lewis Elementary, students are the first priority. Students participate in social-emotional learning with the school counselor and are also recognized through our Stellar Student program. The principal and assistant principal also distribute gold tokens to students to be used in the book vending machine throughout the school day.

Carolyn Lewis' staff is committed to school safety and are trained in keeping the school safe and functioning during the pandemic. Administration, teachers, staff, and students commit to consistent, proper mask wearing and social distancing guidelines within the building. Administration ensures custodians are fogging classrooms and offices daily while teachers have been provided with disinfectant spray to wipe down surfaces on a regular schedule throughout the course of the school day. The building principal and assistant principal continue to monitor classroom and cafeteria seating charts to stay abreast of changes in order to provide appropriate contact tracing, as needed. Teachers and staff are continuously reminded that students are to sit 6 feet apart within the classrooms and are encouraged to keep classroom doors open for proper ventilation.

The mantra from the principal and assistant principal this year has been grace and flexibility. Teachers and Staff completed a SWOT activity (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats) in order to gather baseline data and teacher perception of the current school environment. This data was utilized to create action plans that support the teachers, students, and families. Multiple teacher committees were formed to address various aspects of the building and programs. By having routine discussions, the team of educators and administrators at Carolyn Lewis have been able to show growth and set clear expectations for both students and staff. To best accomplish this growth, informal check-ins are completed throughout the year, a faculty of the month program has been implemented, and staff shout-outs are announced during monthly faculty meetings. The administrators are intentional in providing informal feedback, notes, emails, conversations, and establishing relationships with teachers and staff.

In all things done at Carolyn Lewis, student support is always placed first. Whether the need is academically, socially, or emotionally based, an environment where everyone matters has been established. The assistant principal, instructional facilitator, school counselor, school psychologist, interventionists, and classroom teachers participate in bi-weekly Response to Intervention (RTI) meetings. Data is gathered to support academic and social-emotional learning goals for students in need of support. Interventions are assigned to maximize individualized support and the team provides teachers with the appropriate resources needed to ensure the child's learning goals are met.

#### **5. Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning:**

“Every child, Every Day, Whatever it Takes”, Carolyn Lewis faculty and staff have embraced the district motto. Pride is taken in ensuring students feel welcomed and supported while obtaining an education. Due to the nature of this year, the school year was started with honest and open conversations about race, equality, and cultural/social awareness.

Carolyn Lewis has the largest elementary student population in Conway. This indicates that we serve a varied group of students from numerous diverse backgrounds. Therefore, we started the school year with professional development that would lead to difficult conversations that may not have happened in previous years. With so many diverse backgrounds within the school, everyone must be sure to listen and learn while embracing students' cultural, social, and emotional differences.

Diversity training sessions are held at the beginning of each school year covering relevant topics. Discussions included the effects of poverty on student learning as well as how to create relationships with students and parents of all cultures and backgrounds to ensure they feel valued at Carolyn Lewis Elementary. The assistant principal presented professional development on the movement 'Black Lives Matter' as well as joined with two other minority teachers on presenting 'How to teach minority students'. These sessions were well-received and opened dialogue about privilege and true acceptance. These conversations led to many changes throughout the classrooms within the school, including: additional diverse read-aloud opportunities, encouraging students to discuss cultural differences surrounding particular holidays, showcasing individual talents in an online talent show, among others.

At Carolyn Lewis Elementary, every child is given the opportunity to read books and use resources that reflect one's individuality. A contributing factor in the benchmark reading program is the inclusion of ethnically and culturally diverse characters with topics being highlighted within the text. Students are provided with various opportunities to celebrate the richness of the ethnic groups and cultures within our school while attending art, enrichment, library, music, and physical education classes. Students perform concerts with an array of culturally diverse music, bi-annually. Mariachi Band, a guest reader of Cuban descent, reads stories to the students in the library during Hispanic Heritage Month. Students are encouraged to enter local and state art competitions as well as display work in the hallways. In physical education, students are encouraged to move and express themselves in a myriad of ways throughout the course of the year. Furthermore, students also use the CultureGrams website to learn how our world is such a diverse place, yet we still have more similarities than differences.

It is understood throughout Carolyn Lewis Elementary faculty and staff that discussions and development within the realm of cultural diversity must continue in order to provide all students a firm foundation of acceptance and support within their educational endeavors. Therefore, further professional development will be provided to assure students are given the cultural, social, and emotional acceptance deserved.

## **PART VI - STRATEGY FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

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Carolyn Lewis Elementary faculty and staff strived to surround students with security over the course of the last year. Numerous strategies were employed in order to remain connected during the closures and have continued since returning to onsite instruction. However, the one practice that has been the most instrumental to the school's success in moving students forward throughout the Covid-19 closures has been the connection to data driven instructional practices. It was made known to faculty, from the beginning, that data collection and disaggregation would be an imperative piece to shoring learning gaps once the building was able to reopen. Therefore, teachers continued to collect formative, summative, and screener data even while students were at home. Furthermore, grade level teams regularly met with administration to discuss how to best modify instruction to meet the needs of learners as well as formulate remediation plans for returning to onsite learning. This allowed the teachers an opportunity to immediately hone in on closing gaps once students returned for the 2020-2021 school year.

Teachers returned to school two weeks prior to students in order to have proper planning time as well as to prepare classrooms for Covid-19 precautionary measures. Upon return, they were given an opportunity to see individual students' data to ensure that plans were in place to meet the needs of each student. NWEA Map, ACT Aspire formative assessments, DIBELS benchmark screeners, AR-RAN, RTI, and report card data were all reviewed. Moreover, once the year started, the instructional facilitator and interventionists conducted a variety of screeners to students to provide even more data to help form a complete picture of where to begin instruction. As expected, students were missing gaps of skills related to the inability to foresee the closures occurring for the 2019-2020 academic year. However, since Carolyn Lewis' teachers had a full set of data to show each student's missing pieces, it was much easier to reconnect meaningful learning in the classroom.

Over the course of this year, students have continued to complete formative and summative assessments, NWEA Map tests, Acadience screeners, AR-RAN, DSA, and others in order to ensure that students' data is trending in the right direction. Several virtual students have chosen to report onsite for NWEA Map testing days and all virtual students are required to attend NWEA Map/ACT Aspire testing in April for the summative state assessments. Teachers have connected the trends shown in the data directly to explicit small group instruction which has been an imperative part of this experience.

Overall, learning never stopped for Carolyn Lewis Elementary students as parents were given resources and devices that allowed students to connect to teachers on a regular basis. Teachers worked to meet with struggling learners to keep them motivated in the curriculum while support staff worked to provide resources for word study and family activities. While learning looked different, it was still occurring and the teachers were collecting important data that has led to specific data driven instructional practices within the classroom. Most importantly, the continued effort to collect and disaggregate data will allow future educators the benefit of knowing exactly how to best serve every student walking through the classroom door when they return for the 2021-2022 academic year.